

Application No. 10/700,814
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First Preliminary Amendment

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REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that these amendments be made of record prior to substantive examination. Applicants make this amendment to address the issues raised in the Office Action dated January 23, 2006 and Advisory Action dated July 17, 2006.

In the Office Action, claims 7, 8, 10-14, 16-21, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Griffin in light of Carcerano. Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Griffin in view of Carcerano and further in view of Swift. In response to the Office Action, claims 7, 11 and 26 have been amended.

At the outset, Applicants wish to describe the novel website administration that is claimed. The claimed invention is directed to the administration of a plurality of websites in which administrators of various levels of hierarchy may gain access to any one of the respective websites. Some administrators, at the higher level, may have the rights to mimic administrators at lower levels in the hierarchy in order to perform their administrative duties. Different levels in the hierarchy are associated with different functionalities. To avoid confusion and to remind the administrator at which level they are accessing the website, among the plurality of websites which they are administering, an indicator is provided to the administrator indicating to them (in a ready fashion) the level of the hierarchy at which they are accessing the website.

As taught in the specification and as claimed in the independent claims, the access rights of the administrators are aggregated and upon access, at the administrator access addresses, the server (1) determines the rights of the administrator, (2) enables the icons of the features to which that administrator has access at that level at which they are currently interfacing and (3) renders an indicator of the effective hierachal level of the website accessed. For example, utilizing the exemplary terminology of the specification, if a BLUE user is using a WHITE specific page, such as viewing a calendar module, the visual indicator indicates the white user

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level by displaying a WHITE background or other WHITE theme. However, if the user then accesses a BLUE specific page by enabling an icon, which is an icon for editing the content of the calendar, the indicator will indicate the user's current functioning level, which would be BLUE. Applicants submit that nothing in the prior art teaches such a tool for facilitating multiple layer access across a plurality of websites for maintenance of each of the respective websites.

Turning to specific claims, claim 7 as now amended defines a method for administering a plurality of websites, wherein the at least one website is hosted at a server comprising the steps of administering the plurality of websites by accessing a respective website at an address corresponding to a user hierarchical level. The hierarchical level rights are then determined and an indicator is provided to the user to remind them at which level within the hierarchy they are operating. Griffin and Carcerano do not teach these features.

Griffin is directed to the delegation of an administrator's powers within a single website. In other words, Griffin does not enable the administration of a plurality of websites hosted at the server. Furthermore, nothing in Griffin teaches accessing the respective one website of a plurality of websites at an address corresponding to a hierarchical level. Although paragraphs 14, 15 and 36 relied upon in the Office Action do teach delegating powers to either individual or grouped users within a single website, there is no teaching of associating an access address corresponding to a level in the hierarchy as claimed.

Furthermore, as conceded in the Office Action, Griffin fails to teach providing an indicator to the user of the hierarchical level at which they have accessed the website. This is because Griffin is concerned with the delegation of tools to different groups, but not keeping track of the level at which the website has been accessed. Carcerano does not overcome this shortcoming.

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First, Applicants submit that Carcerano is an improper reference. Carcerano is not directed to the administration of websites, but the administration of hardware within a system. Carcerano is not concerned with the issues that are of concern to web developers, access to the website, manipulation of modules in a website, but to the totally unrelated problem of updating configurations of office equipment. There would be no suggestion to combine the references. One in the website art would not look to monitoring and updating office equipment configurations when solving the problem of hierachal control of access rights to administer a plurality of websites. A wbsite administrator requires tools, skill sets, and approaches entirely alien to hardware maintenance and control. The suggested combination is not only improper because there is no suggestion to combine, but if allowed does not teach the claimed invention.

Even if the two were combinable, they do not teach the claimed step of providing an indicator to the user of the hierachal level at which they have accessed the website. Because there is no hierachal level in Carcerano, the indicator is binary. It merely acknowledges that the accessing person is an administrator. It does not indicate where in a hierarchy the administrator is. It merely acknowledges that the user is an administrator performing an administrative function. Furthermore, it indicates the mode of the website, switching to administrative from non-administrative, not a hierachal level. It does not provide the information, which prevents confusion among a plurality of administrators within the system for administering a plurality of websites. It does not contemplate or allow for the above example where the BLUE administrator entered the system at a non-administrative WHITE level. Therefore, even if combined, the references do not teach the claimed invention.

Claims 8 and 10 depend from claim 7 and define the invention with greater particularity. Claim 8 defines a graphical indicator so that the user knows the hierachal level at which they are currently functioning, regardless of whether that is the administrator's highest hierachal level to facilitate administration of the website.

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Claim 10 defines the method discussed above in greater detail for the situation in which the user is accessing at one level even though they may have originally entered the system at another level or have access rights to another level. Claim 10 defines storing the ultimate hierarchical level of the user at the server, entering the website at a different hierarchical level and providing a second indicator than the original access indicator if in fact the status has changed. Nothing in Carcerano or Griffin contemplates a method, which enables a user entering the system at one level, switching to another and having an indication to the user which changes as they are functioning at the current level. This is because neither reference contemplates the subtleties or the novel administrative methodology, which facilitates the interaction of independent administrators at different hierarchical levels, all performing their respective functions across the plurality of websites. Carcerano's binary indicator cannot indicate the specific level within a multilevel hierarchy. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that claims 8 and 10 are allowable as defining patentable combinations in their own right as well as depending from allowable claim 7.

Claim 11, like claim 7, is directed to a method for administration of a plurality of websites by accessing a respective website at an address corresponding to the hierarchical level. Claim 11 determines the access rights of the user based upon access rights information stored at the remote server, aggregates the rights of the user and displays enabling icons at the website which is being accessed corresponding to the aggregated access rights for the user and provides a graphical indicator of the hierarchical administrative level at which access is made to the user.

As discussed above in connection with claim 7, the combination of Griffin and Carcerano is a hindsight invention combination, which even if permissible, which Applicants submit it is not, does not teach the claimed methodology of displaying or providing a graphical indicator to the user at the website of the hierarchical administrative level at which access is made by the user. Again, it is conceded in the Office Action that Griffin does not provide this key functionality. Carcerano does nothing more than indicate to the user that they are in fact an administrator, it does not indicate where in

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the administrative hierarchy they reside, nor does it provide the more important indication of the administration level currently being performed at the website. There is no one-to-one correlation in the claimed invention between the highest available hierachal administrative level and the level which is being currently being displayed at the website to that user. This is the novelty of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 11 is allowable over the prior art.

Claims 12-14 and 16-21 depend from claim 11 and define the invention with greater particularity. Specifically, claim 12 defines grouping similar users together while claim 13 defines determining the hierachal level of the user while claim 14 defines determining the current operating hierachal level of the user as it corresponds to the address utilized to access the website. This further delineates the difference identified above, that a user can enter the system at one of a plurality of hierachal levels, not consistently the same hierachal level. As a result, the method step in claims 16 and 17 determine whether a user is authorized to access the address corresponding to those access rights as not all administrators are entitled to access the system at a particular hierachal level.

Claims 20 and 21 also recognize that the hierachal level of the user must first be determined as a function of the rights of the user which is different than determining the level by the address corresponding to the hierachal administrative level. Claim 21 specifically defines allowing the user to enter the website at a different hierachal level than that stored at the server. Nothing this subtle or complex is contemplated by Griffin even under its model of delegating powers. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 12-14 and 16-21 are allowable as defining patentable combinations in their own right as well as depending from allowable claim 11.

Claim 26 defines a system for administration of a plurality of websites including a server, a plurality of internet accesses for accessing the server where each access corresponds to a hierachal administrative level for administrating the website. An indicator is displayed at the website to indicate to the user a hierachal level of the

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user at which the user is performing administration of the website. As discussed above, this is a system which clearly contemplates and makes possible the administration of a website by a single user at a plurality of hierachal levels by indicating to the user the functional hierachal level at which the user is operating. This is an administrative tool made easier to use by the claimed invention.

Claim 27 depends from claim 26, which defines the manner in which the server enables the access rights for the user. Applicants submit that 26 and 27 are allowable as defining patentable combinations not contemplated by either Griffin or Carcerano.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Griffin and Carcerano and further in view of Swift. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 9 depends from claim 7 and defines with greater particularity that the indicator to the user is color changed corresponding to the hierachal level at which the user is accessing the website to perform that certain operation. Nothing in Griffin or Carcerano teaches the basic methodology. Nothing in Swift overcomes that shortcoming. Swift is directed to a binary system, which allows access, or not to privileged and non-privileged portions. Nothing overcomes the shortcomings of Griffin or Carcerano with respect to the administration of a plurality of websites, administering a website by accessing a website at an address corresponding to a hierachal level, and providing an indicator to the user of this hierachal level at which they have accessed the website. Swift is directed to providing access to different pages or areas within a website. The indicator in Swift is on a task-by-task basis and is not an indicator of where in the hierarchy the user currently is operating. Accordingly, a key limitation is not taught by Swift, which does nothing to overcome the shortcomings of either Griffin or Carcerano.

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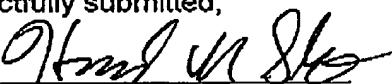
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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place this application in condition for allowance. If the Examiner is unable to issue an immediate Notice of Allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney with a view towards discussing the outstanding issues.

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Respectfully submitted,

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